

A HÚNIYAM IMAGE:

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LONG residence amongst the native Siphalese and careful observation of their superstitious practices and expressions of superstitious ideas lead to the conclusion that, amongst the lower castes, who have also hitherto been the most ignorant, Buddhism has not existed as a religion. The tom-tom beaters, the toddy-drawers, the jaggery-makers, have only lately attempted to build Buddhist temples of their own. The Amara-pura sect of Buddhists is a modern importation to satisfy the social ambition of the *Mahabaddé* people, candidates of whose community for priestly ordination would have been refused by the previously existing Siamese sect. The latter, though heterodox in this exclusiveness, had confined the right of ordination to pupils drawn from the *Goyigama* caste.

The liberal and orthodox principle of the Amarapura sect extended in time from the *Mahabaddé* and *Karavé* to lower castes. As an instance, the jaggery people (*Vahumpura*) near Galle have built a temple, and their pupil-priests in yellow robes and with begging-bowls in their hands are now seen obtaining the food of mendicants from the hands of their own friends. The profound meditative air of the young mendicants, and the evident pride with which their friends give alms and honor the new priesthood are very striking. This is quite a reform, and Buddhism, perhaps for the first time, is subverting what other missions have not hitherto observed as a likely field of conversion. Before this reform the priests of the very low castes have been the *Yakadurás*, commonly called *Kattādiyás*, belonging to the tom-tom beater and *Oliya* castes. *Kapuráks* belong to all castes, and *Pattinis* also belong to all castes.

These remarks apply to the practice of *Kapurálas*. The priests undergo a training—which, if they have a good memory, is of not long duration—namely, the committing to memory of certain charms, invocations, and songs to be accompanied on the tom-tom, drum, and by violent dances. One must live in the neighbourhood of these devil-worshippers to appreciate the form of nuisance known as a 'devil-ceremony.' The tom-tom is beaten violently to accompany the discordant song, and the noises are very violent during the intervals of dancing. The family having the ceremony keep it up from sunset till past dawn the next morning. If any remonstrance is used with respect to such practices, they will excuse themselves on the ground that it is their "religion" or "faith." But the *Yakadurás* are in no way respected for being priests, and their remuneration is very little.

Besides the performance of these devil-dances the *Yakadurás* practise *Húniyam* charms,* by which harm—such as disease—is inflicted on one's fellow-creatures. To counteract *Húniyam* charms counter-charms† are muttered over a cup of oil or a thread, and three limes are cut with an arecanut-cutter whilst charms are muttered.‡ The failure of such counter-charms strengthens the belief in the potency of the *Húniyam*. In most of these *Húniyam* charms a small image, made of wax or wood or drawn on a leaf, is necessary. Nails made of five metals§ (usually gold, silver, copper, tin, and lead) are driven

* "*Koḍivina* [කොඩිවින] or *Húniyam* [හුනියම්] is the name given to evils of whatever kind inflicted by the agency of charms..... There are said to be 84,000 [*Húniyam* charms] of every degree of malignity, most of which more or less contribute to bring to an untimely death the person affected by this influence, though that event may be deferred for many years. (C. A. S. Jour. 1865-6, p. 68.)—*Hon. Sec.*

† *Húniyam kepíma* [හුනියම් කේපිම].

‡ C. A. S. Jour. 1865-6, pp. 70-1.

§ *Pas ló* [පස් ලො].

into the image at important parts of the body, such as the head or heart. These images, after the process of charming, are buried under a stile so that the intended victim may pass over it* and be thus affected. This "passing over" of the buried image is generally indispensable. After the charms have taken effect, the image is otherwise secreted.*

The image I now send was found in the trunk of a *Rukattana* tree.† An oblong hole corresponding in shape to the tin box holding the image had been neatly cut into the trunk of the tree in a direction S.S.W., and about two feet high from the ground. The box containing the image had been inserted inside this hole and a tin plate, covering the hole, neatly nailed over with copper nails.‡ It is of course absurd to suppose that this contrivance could have had any effect, but should the intended victim have met with an accident or stroke of disease, there would have been another instance of the potency of the *Hūniyam*.

In the Society's Journal for 1865-66 will be found an exhaustive treatise on "Sinhalese Demonology" by Dandris De Silva, Mudaliyār. This short introductory sketch is only intended to introduce the *Hūniyam* image now sent, which is interesting as a specimen of one which had been actually uttered with malicious intent. When discovered it had evidently been long imbedded in the tree, and unless the particular *Yakadurá* who performed the devil-ceremony in this instance will volunteer a confession, no further light will be thrown upon the subject.

* *Pannavanavá* [පන්වනව]. C. A. S. Jour. 1865-6, p. 71.

† *Alstonia scholaris*, R. Br.

‡ The annexed plate gives an exact size photograph of the image by the side of its tin "coffin." Nails pierce the head, heart, right side, chest, and feet, and threads are wound round the body from the neck downward.—*Hon. Sec.*

It may be noted that the natives of the *Máldives*, though they have been converted to the Muhammadan faith, still continue to practise the same class of incantations as the lower classes of the *Sinhalese*. This *Hūniyam* image may therefore possibly have been made by a native of the *Máldives*, many of whom live near the neighbourhood where the image was discovered, though this is unlikely. This is one of the many points of resemblance between the low-country *Sinhalese* and *Máldivians*.*

NOTE.

[The *Máldive Islanders*—particularly those living on the Southernmost Atols, *Huvadú* (*Suvádiva*) and *Adđú*, which have been least affected by foreign influence—retain to this day the character of being "great necromancers,"† as old Duarte Barbosa (A. D. 1501-17) described them three and a half centuries ago, and as the captive Frenchman Pyrard found them a century later (A. D. 1602-7).‡

The difficulty all the world over of eradicating long-established customs and deeply-rooted beliefs—more especially when these enter into the exigencies of every-day life—is an accepted fact, confirmed by the experience of ages.

* At Mr. Nell's request a brief note is added with the intention of partially illustrating the similarity between the superstitious practices of the *Sinhalese* and *Máldivians*. The subject may be more fully dealt with hereafter.—*H. C. P. B., Hon. Sec.*

† "As gentes dellas nao tem armas, e sao homens fracos, mas muito engenhosos, e sobre tudo grandes encantadores."—*Noticias das Nações Ultramarinas*, Tomo. II., p. 352, Lisboa, 1812.

‡ "Les Mathématiques y sont enseignées, et ils en font aussi grand estat, notamment de l'Astrologie, à laquelle plusieurs personnes estudient, d'autant qu'à tout propos on consulte les Astrologues : il n'y en a pas vn qui voulust rien entreprendre sans leur en auoir demandé aduis."—*Voyage de F. Pyrard*, p. 135, Paris, 1679."

It need not, therefore, be a matter of surprise to find the rigorous monotheistic faith of Islám existing to this day side by side on the Máldive group with "the relics of idolatrous superstition,"—nay, more, to see the sacred Kurán itself prostituted to the unholy objects of devil worship.

The pilgrimage to Mekka and "the silly and ridiculous" ceremonies which have ever formed a necessary part of it, were but original threads of Arab idolatry, which expediency prompted the Prophet to interweave with his fabric of a purer religion.*

Nearly all orthodox Muhammadans have an implicit belief in what is termed "Divine magic" (*Ar-Rahmání*), "the sublime science" employed only for good purposes, but sternly denounce the practice of enchantment (*As-Sahr*) and of "Satanic" (*Shaitání*) and "Natural magic" (*As-Simiyá*) in general. All forms alike are supposed to derive greater efficacy from interlarding the usual mysterious words, numbers, diagrams, &c., of charms, with names of the Deity and passages from the Kurán.†

The two following philtres or love charms‡ come under the Sanskrit category of *Stambhana* or of *Vibhishana*—those intended to procure illicit sexual intercourse and effect discord.§ The appropriate Demons invoked by the Singhalese are *Madana Yaksaniyó*, 'the She-Demons of Lust.' "These demons, when worked upon by certain charms, and propitiated with certain offerings and ceremonials, are supposed to use their power of seducing the affections of a man or a woman in such a manner that the person so influenced is said to find the power perfectly irresistible. There are hundreds of ways in which it is pretended this can be done."||

* See Sale's Koran, Preliminary Discourse, p. 94 ("Chandos Classics" Edition), London.

† Lane's "Arabian Nights," Vol. I., pp. 58-9, London, 1877.

‡ The transcript in Roman characters of the Máldive (Addú Atol) charms and the rough glossary, given below, will further enable Singhalese scholars to trace the philological connection between the two languages. Addú orthography differs considerably from the Málé (Sultan's Island) standard.

§ Dandris De Silva Gunaratna, Mudaliyár, in Jour. C. A. S., 1865-6, pp. 53-4.

|| *Idem*, p. 31.

MÁLDIVE MANTRAS.*

No. 1.

Gada istiri vari tura' kurákan haivakaru abaku de míhunge rúfa kurahai hadduru harrulí nuvá gíhí badilí elagođi abu gahani.

Translation.

"To completely estrange a desirable woman (from her husband)—make a teak nail (and) an image of both persons, (mutter) 'hadduru harrulí nuvá gíhí badilí elagođi,' † and drive in the nail."

Glossary.

Abaku, abu, 'nail.' Cf. Malay *paku*.

Istiri, 'woman,' 'wife': S. *স্ত্রী* [*strí*].

Kurahai, lit. 'having made,' = *kurafá* (Málé), p. part. of *kuray*: S. *කරාලා* [*karalá*].

Kurákan—See *tura'* kurákan.

Gada, lit. 'health': not improbably = S. *අගද* [*agada*] (*අ*, negative, *ගද* disease.)

Gahani, 'strike': S. *ගහනවා* [*gahanavá*].

Tura' (*kurákan*) 'to disunite': S. *තුරන් කරනවා* [*turan karaná*].

De, 'two,' 'both': S. *දෙ* [*de*].

Míhunge, gen. pl. of *míhá*; S. *මිනිසුන්ගේ* [*minisunge*], gen. pl. of *මිනිසා* [*minihá*] 'man.'

Rúfa, 'image': S. *රූප* [*rúpa*].

Vari, ? adv. 'greatly': S. *වැර* [*vera*]; but *vari kuray* 'to divorce' (Málé).

Haivakaru, 'teak,' (*Tectona grandis*, L.). Cf. Hind. *ságaun*.

No. 2.

Gada istiriye' liame karhi male' fari nuvańs kađágen au valie' hanulaigen mi malu effurhu *Al Kadr Súra* lie ane' furhumati *Vajahatu* lie mi malu rúfa kurahá váhaka vará ołun lie *Al Rahmán Súra* huswáden lie' vá' rónu' fas tan bede rakas bođe' katiláeige lein

* "Sorcery" is with the Máldivians *fađita*—S. *පාඨිත* [*pađita*],—'the learned (science).'

† The *mantra* or incantation proper; unintelligible. All else is "a sort of rubric," as with Singhalese charms (*vide* C.A.S. Journ., 1865-6, p. 57), in which the object is stated, and directions given for the *jíwama*, or "winding up."

kaliko' dumarhí bávvai hikkai tin duvas vímái nagaigen gos múdu
aláni kakú fenu eḷi nama balai fonuvani fūlu fenu eḷi nama audei.

Translation.

"Write (the name of) a desirable woman; pluck an unopened bud of the screw-pine flower; sharpen a new knife; on one side of this flower write *Al Kadr Súra* :* on the other side write *Vajahatu*; † make an image out of this flower; write particulars of the horoscope; write *Al Rahmán Súra* ‡ from beginning to end; tie (the image) in five places with left-hand-(twisted) coir; § cut the throat of a blood-sucker (lizard); || smear its blood (on the image); place it on a loft; dry (it) for three days; (then) take it and enter the sea—if (you) go in knee-deep (she) will send a message; if (you) go in to the waist (she) will come."

* "Verily we sent down the *Korán* in the night of *Al Kadr*. And what shall make thee understand how excellent the night of *Al Kadr* is? The night of *Al Kadr* is better than a thousand months. Therein do the Angels descend, and the spirit Gabriel also, by the permission of their Lord, with his decrees concerning every matter. It is peace until the rising of the morn."—Sale's *Korán*, Chap. xevii, p. 451.

† The *Vajahatu* is always recited by Muslims before commencing prayers. It forms part of *Al Bakr* ("Cattle") *Súra*:—"I direct my face unto him who hath created the heavens and the earth; I am orthodox, and not one of the idolaters Say, Verily my prayers, and my worship, and my life, and my death, are dedicated unto God, the Lord of all creatures; He hath no companion. This have I been commanded: I am the first Moslem."—Sale's *Korán*, Chap. vi, pp. 96, 104.

‡ The *Súra* entitled "The Merciful," containing 78 verses. It somewhat resembles Psalm cvii, but is vitiated by including adoration for blessings of a sensuous paradise assured to 'the faithful.'—"Which, therefore, of your Lord's benefits will ye ungratefully deny?" See Sale's *Korán*, Chap. Iv, pp. 394-6.

§ *Vá, vái* or *vātu rónu*, is coir twisted by the left hand upon the right: as opposed to right-hand-twisted coir called *handi* or *kanátu rónu*.

|| A blood-sucker or a chameleon plays a part in the Singhalese *húniyam* charm called *Lé káma bandhanaya* [ලේ කාම බන්ධනය].

Glossary.

Au, 'new': S. අළුත් [*aḷut*].

Audei, '(will) come.' At *Málé ádé* is imp. 'come.' Cf. S. එව් [*évi*].

Ane, 'other': S. අනිත් [*anit*].

Aláni, 'enter': perhaps contracted from *atolani*, = S. ඇතුළුවෙතමා [*etulvenavá*].

Effurhu, '(on) one side' = *eke* + *furhu*: S. එක පිටේ [*eka piṭé*]; *furhumati*. Cf. S. මතුපිට [*matupīṭa*].

Eḷi, pret. of *alaṇ* (?) 'to enter.'

Oḷun? The phrase *váhaka vará oḷun* (translated, 'particulars of the horoscope,') apparently means the day and hour of birth, and the auspicious or inauspicious position of the moon and planets, as affecting the victim, deducible from (her) horoscope. Compare the Singhalese use (C. A. S. Journ. 1865-6, pp. 71-2).

Kakú, 'knee': S. කකුල [*kakula*] 'leg'; *kakú fenu*, 'knee-deep water.'

Kaḍágen, pres. part. of *kaḍaṇ*, 'to pluck,' 'break': S. කඩාගෙන [*kaḍágena*].

Katilaige (? *katilaigen*), pres. part. 'cutting the throat.'

Karhi, = *karhikeyo*, *Pandanus odoratissimus*, L., 'screw-pine': S. මැටි කෙටියා [*veṭakeyiyá*].

Kaḷiho, 'hav. smeared,' Cf. S. ගාලා [*gála*].

Gos, 'hav. gone,' p. part. of *dāṇ* 'to go': S. ගොස් [*gos*].

Tan, pl. of *tana*, 'place,' S. තැන [*tēna*].

Tin, 'three': S. තුන් [*tun*].

Dumarhí, '(on) a loft': S. දුම [*duma*].

Duvas, 'days': S. දවස් [*davas*].

Nama, 'if': S. නම් [*nam*].

Nagaigen, pres. part. of *nagaṇ* 'to take.' Cf. S. අරගෙන [*aragana*].

Nuvanis, 'unopened.' Cf. S. නවමි [*navum*], නවුමි [*nevum*] 'new.'

Fari, 'bud': S. පඵ [*paḷu*].

Fas, 'five': S. පස් [*pas*].

Furhumati. See above *effurhu*.

Fūlu, 'navel,' 'waist'; *fūlu fenu*, 'waist-deep water.' Cf. S. වලගා [*valaga*], 'waist.'

Fenu, 'water': S. පැන් [*pen*].

Fonuvani, '(will) send.' Cf. S. එවතමා [*evanavá*].

Balai, 'message,' 'messenger.' Cf. Páli, *balattho*; but also S. බලයා [*balaya*], 'hireling.'

Bávvai, p. part. 'hav. placed': S. බාවලා [*bávála*].

Rēde, p. part. 'hav. tied': S. බැඳ [*bēnda*].

Boḍe (*rahas boḍe*), 'blood-sucker' (lizard, *calotes*): S. බොහොඩු [*bo-honḍu*] 'chameleon.'

Mi, 'this': S. මේ [*mē*].

Male, *malu*, 'flower': S. මල [*mala*].

Mūdu, 'sea': S. මුදු [*mūda*].

Rakas, forms compound with *boḍe* (q. v.): probably = S. රකුස් [*rakus*], 'demon.'

Rōnu, 'coir': S. රේනා [*rēna*], 'string,' 'cord.'

Liame, *lie*, 'hav. written,' p. part. of *liyaṇ*,—correct form *liyā*, *liyaṇā* (Málé)—S. ලියා [*liyā*]; *me* (in *liyame*) perhaps = S. ම [*ma*], intensive affix.

Lein, 'with blood': S. ලේයින් [*leyin*].

Vará, ? See above, *oḷun*.

Valie, 'knife.' Cf. Malay *pisau vali*.

Vāhaka, 'words'—*vāhaka-dakkaṇ* (Málé) 'to talk.' Cf. S. වාහා [*vāhya*]. See above, *oḷun*.

Vá, 'left-hand': S. වම [*vama*]. At Maliku (Minakai) written *vái* or *vātu*.

Vimái, lit. 'there having been (3 days).' Cf. use of S. වෙලා [*velā*].

Hanulaigen, pres. part. 'sharpening': S. හණ [*haṇa*], 'whet-stone,' ලාගණ [*lāgaṇa*], 'placing; ගාගණ [*gāgaṇa*], 'rubbing,' used instead.

Hikkai, 'hav. dried,' p. part. of *hikaṇ* 'to dry.' Cf. Pāli *sukka*.

Huswāden, adv. 'from beginning to end. Cf. S. හිස්සා [*hisva*], 'empty.'*

* Many words occurring in these *mantras* differ entirely from their equivalents given by Christopher in his "Vocabulary of the Máldivian Language" (J. R. A. S., Vol. VI. o. s., pp. 42-76), probably compiled at Málé. The dialect of Huvadú and Aḍḍú Atols approaches Siṅhalese more closely than that of the rest of the group lying to the North.